DESIGNS FOR KNOCKERS.

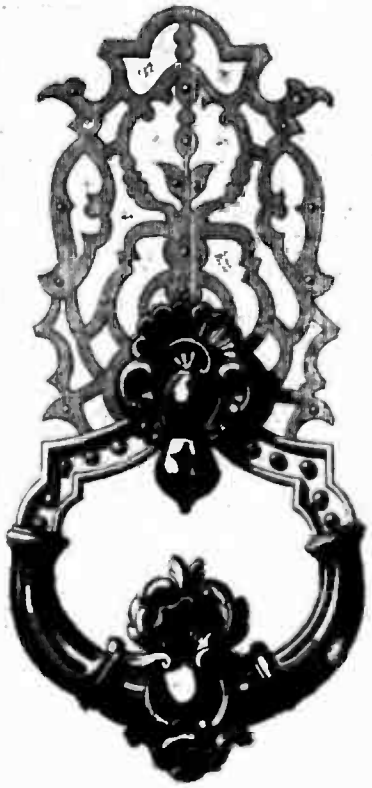

Fig. 3.

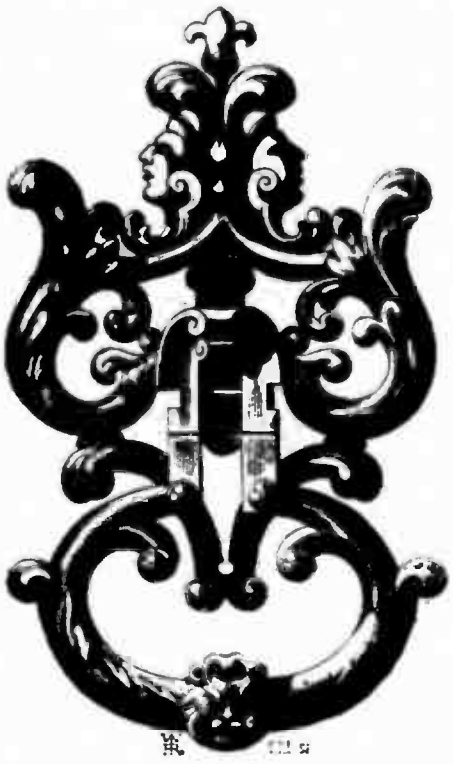

Fig. 4.

INTERIOR OF ST. STEPHEN'S, WESTMINSTER.

A VIEW of the outside of St. Stephen's, Westminster, built in Rochester-row, at the sole cost of Miss Burdett Coutts, under the superintendence of Mr. Ferrey, appeared some time ago in our pages,* and more recently we described the internal arrangement of the edifice.† As one of the most important churches built in modern times, we now give a carefully-executed view of the interior of this structure, and for descriptive particulars refer our readers to the previous notices.

DESIGNS FOR KNOCKERS.

WE continue our series of drawings of old knockers from the streets of Paris, commenced on page 475 *ante*. Fig. 3 is from the Rue Hautefeuille, and Fig. 4 from Rue Jacob. These are both of the Renaissance period.

EXPLOSION OF A CHAMBERED VIADUCT.

A SINGULAR accident occurred at Birmingham on Thursday, the 7th inst., when the large viaduct on the London and North-Western line, near the station, actually exploded while a goods train was passing, the explosive force, whatever it was, tearing off both sides of the line, levelling the coping, hurling down for the length of about thirty yards heavy masses of earth and stonework, lifting the engine and tender, a weight of about thirty-five tons, as if they had been playthings, and throwing them off the line. The effects produced are thus described by the local *Journal*:—"Huge blocks of masonry, varying from ten to forty tons, pitched to the distance of many yards, had sunk deep into the ground; mounds of earth scattered far and near; masses of freestone, weighing many hundred weights, tossed about like thistle-down. The timbers of "the lift" had been crushed in and splintered like reeds. The solid stone and brickwork of the arch, for about 20 feet, was shattered and rent; here ragged and torn, there cut off as smoothly as if a chisel had been applied, the posts of the telegraph and the broken wires forming a sort of tracery along the side; and above was the engine, half turned over, swathed in mud and gravel, seemingly as if resting on a mere riband. Had it been a light passenger train instead of a heavy goods, there is every probability that it would have been sent reeling over the viaduct."

It was computed, that at least 1,000 tons, including the engine, were raised and disloged by the shock. As to the cause it is unknown. By some it is believed that an explosion of gas was the cause; but as no flame or light was seen, that idea has been abandoned by many. Others think foul air had accumulated in the cells or chambers and small arches in the viaduct, and that heavy pressure produced the rupture. An explosion of fire-damp, such as exists in coal pits, is also suggested. As so many railway structures have such covered arches, the question is one of anxious interest, and demands a searching investigation. The damage, meantime, is being rapidly repaired by Messrs. Branson and Gwyther.

GAS.

A COMPANY, it is said, has been formed in Birmingham to supply gas at 4s. per 1,000 feet.——The gas works at Lytham being now completed, the town has been lighted up with gas. A patent purifying composition has been introduced.——Another of those important revelations which we have occasionally noted, where the actual cost of gas made at public establishments, in which no cause for concealment or misstatement can exist, has just been made at Leeds. The following particulars are from the *Leeds Mercury*. The case of the Wakefield House of Correction, we need scarcely remark, was long since made good use of in this journal, and thence found its way throughout the whole country:—"Mr. Edward Shepherd, the governor of the West-Riding House of Correction, states that the quantity of gas annually consumed in the prison and its adjuncts is about 5,000,000 feet, and that for the year ending September 30, 1850, the entire cost, including retorts and every other expense except labour, was 9½d per 1,000 feet! The 1,700 lights were supplied for a total cost of 175*l*., being about 25*l*. less than was paid for the gas consumed during same period in the Leeds Borough Gaol, with scarcely 500 lights to supply. The cost of the gas at Wakefield House of Correction does not include anything for labour, the prisoners being engaged to manufacture it; but even if that had to be paid for, it would not add materially to the amount. Mr. Shepherd only employs four prisoners in summer and five in winter, and he states that if more efficient labourers than the prison generally supplies were engaged, a less number would do all the work required. We believe the facts which Mr. Shepherd has brought before the public, arising out of his experiments in manufacturing gas, have tended much to reduce its price in other places. This is no doubt the case in Wakefield, where, with a much smaller consumption than in Leeds, the gas company are now supplying it at 4s. per thousand feet retail. We understand that Mr. Shepherd has been applied to for information on this subject from Sheffield and many other places, and that he has, in compliance with the request made to him, supplied such particulars as prove most conclusively that gas can be manufactured at a comparatively nominal cost."——At a vestry meeting held in Leeds, the following resolution was lately agreed to:—"That, in the opinion of this meeting, it is highly desirable that the Council should apply to Parliament during the ensuing session for power to establish gas works, and to make and sell gas."——In consequence of recent complaints made in the *Bradford Observer* as to the high price of gas at Bradford, the local gas company have announced a reduction from 5s. to 4s. 6d. with discounts ranging from 2½ to 25½ per cent.——"A spirited meeting," says a contemporary, "has been held in Otley to obtain a reduction in the price of gas, at present 9s. per 1,000 feet. At Yeadon, it is 6s. 8d., and it was resolved to memorialize the directors to bring it down to that sum. Our correspondent thinks that by charging so high a price for their gas, the directors are 'standing in their own light!'"

* Vol. V. p. 380.
† Page 518, *ante*.

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